GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5248
ANSWERED ON:14.05.2007
INVESTMENT IN IRRIGATION
Vallabbhaneni Shri Balashowry

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether inadequate irrigation facilities is one of the major reasons for the problems being faced by the agriculture sector;

(b) if so, whether the investment on irrigation has considerably declined over the years;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to increase the investment in irrgation?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV)

(a) No Sir, irrigation is one of the basic inputs for agriculture. However, the agriculture is dependent on many other factors such as seeds, extension services & marketing, watershed development, credit facilities etc.

(b) & (c) There has been a gradual increase in the plan outlay for the irrigation sector over the different plan periods. The total expenditure for major & medium irrigation and minor irrigation during the First plan was Rs. 441.86 crore and the outlay for the Tenth Plan for major & medium and minor irrigation was Rs.84734.64 crore. However, the public investment in irrigation sector as percentage of the total plan investment exhibit decline over time.

(d) Irrigation being a State subject, irrigation projects are conceived, planned and implemented by the State Governments as per their own priority. The National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP) states that irrigation will receive the highest investment priority and all on-going projects will be completed according to a strict time schedule and that water management in all its aspects, both for irrigation and drinking purposes will receive urgent attention. The Government of India provides central assistance to the State Governments for completion of on-going irrigation projects under the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP). The AIBP criteria have been relaxed and procedures simplified to cover more projects under this programme. Further, the draft Approach Paper for XI Plan also envisages to double the rate of growth of irrigated area and to improve water management, rainwater harvesting and watershed development.